

Message Text

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TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJ: EUROPEAN CHIEFS OF MISSION MEETING: US-IRELAND RELATIONS

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RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND ARE EXCELLENT. THOSE IN THE POWER QUEUE OF BOTH MAJOR PARTIES ARE GENERALLY WELL DISPOSED TOWARD THE UNITED STATES. PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE RELATIONS ARE ALSO GOOD, BUT NEED ATTENTION. WHILE WE HAVE NO MOMENTOUS PROBLEMS WITH THE IRISH, WE DO HAVE AREAS OF CONCERN THAT COULD GROW WORSE.

1. IRELAND AND THE EC: WITH THE ENTRY LAST JANUARY OF IRELAND INTO THE EC, THE IRISH NATION BEGAN A PROCESS OF REORIENTATION FROM AN ATLANTIC TO A EUROPEAN OUTLOOK. IRELAND JOINED EUROPE BASICALLY BECAUSE 70 PERCENT OF ITS EXPORTS WENT TO BRITAIN, AND IT HAD NO CHOICE OTHER THAN TO FOLLOW BRITAIN IN. HAVING JOINED, HOWEVER, IT EXPECTS TO GAIN HANDSOMELY FROM EUROPE'S HIGH-PRICED AGRICULTURAL REGIME AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY. MOREOVER, IRELAND NOW SEES ITSELF AS MEMBER OF AN EXCLUSIVE CLUB. AND AS THE POOREST MEMBER OF THAT CLUB, IT HAS SUDDENLY BECOME JEALOUS OF THE RIGHTS AND PREROGATIVES OF MEMBERSHIP, PARTICULARLY WHEN THESE PREROGATIVES SEEM TO BE QUESTIONED BY POWERFUL OUTSIDERS, LIKE OUR-

SELVES. IN THE YEARS AHEAD WE EXPECT THAT IRELAND WILL BE ONE OF THE MORE DIFFICULT MEMBERS OF THE EC FOR US TO DEAL WITH, SPECIFICALLY IN THE AREA OF DEFENSE, BECAUSE OF IRELAND'S TRADITIONAL NEUTRALITY; AND IN THE REDUCTION OF AGRICULTURAL TRADE BARRIERS, BECAUSE IRELAND IS A MAJOR AGRICULTURAL COUNTRY. IN BOTH THESE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 DUBLIN 01360 091816Z

MATTERS,

WE EXPECT TO SEE THE IRISH ALIGNED WITH THE FRENCH, PERHAPS EVEN OUT IN FRONT OF THEM, UNTIL THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY ITSELF REALIGNS ITS INTERNAL FORCES.

2. PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE RELATIONS:

THIS SHIFT IN IRISH INTERESTS FROM THE ATLANTIC TO EUROPE POINTS UP A SECOND AREA OF CONCERN, WHICH IS THE NEED TO PROMOTE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE U.S. IRELAND'S JOINING THE EC COMES AT A TIME WHEN OUR LEADING ROLE IN WORLD AFFAIRS, OUR OVERWHELMING INFLUENCE, THE CANDOR WITH WHICH WE EXAMINE OUR OWN PROBLEMS AND FINALLY OUR TENDENCY TO TAKE THE IRISH FOR GRANTED HAVE ALL PRODUCED THEIR EFFECT--NOT ALWAYS FAVORABLE. WE NEED TO STRENGTHEN OUR PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM, WHICH HAD BEEN ELIMINATED ALTOGETHER FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS. SPECIFICALLY, WE NEED TO PROMOTE THE STUDY OF AMERICA IN IRELAND, WHICH IS THE ONLY COUNTRY IN WESTERN EUROPE THAT DOES NOT HAVE AMERICAN STUDIES AS PART OF THE REGULAR CURRICULUM IN ANY OF ITS UNIVERSITIES.

3. NORTHERN IRELAND: FOR LAST YEAR AND ONE-HALF, IRISH AND BRITISH GOVT'S HAVE BOTH AIMED AT ENDING THE CIVIL STRIFE BY POLITICAL COMPROMISE, WHILE RECONCILING CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE ISLAND. TODAY, ODDS PROBABLY FAVOR A PAINFUL AND JERKY WINDING DOWN OF CONFLICT. BUT THERE IS STILL A POSSIBILITY OF ALL-OUT CIVIL WAR. EVEN MORE PEACE-KEEPING TROOPS WOULD THEN BE NEEDED (THERE ARE NOW SOME 15,000 BRITISH SOLDIERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND), AND THERE WOULD BE A CHANCE OF LONG-TERM INSTABILITY THROUGHOUT THE ISLAND. US SECURITY INTERESTS COULD THEN BE AFFECTED, THOUGH NOT SO DIRECTLY AS THOSE OF THE BRITISH. SHORT OF THIS CIVIL-WAR SCENARIO, THE WIDE AREA OF DUBLIN/LONDON AGREEMENT EASES OUR POLICY DECISIONS, BECAUSE WE CAN THOROUGHLY AGREE WITH BOTH. ONE SOURCE OF FRICTION REMAINS: EMOTIONAL INVOLVEMENT OF THE IRISH-AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN THE U.S. FOR US, THIS MERELY CREATES SOME INCONVENIENCE, BUT THE IRISH ARE VERY CONCERNED ABOUT AMERICAN CONTRIBUTIONS OF MONEY AND ARMS TO THE IRA. FOR THE SAKE OF BOTH THE IRISH AND THE BRITISH, AS WELL AS FOR OUR OWN INTERESTS IN EUROPEAN STABILITY, WE MUST DO WHAT WE CAN TO DISCOURAGE CONTRIBUTIONS TO VIOLENCE IN IRELAND.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 DUBLIN 01360 091816Z

4. RELATIONS WITH THE EAST: DURING HIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY VISIT LAST MONTH, FOREIGN MINISTER FITZGERALD AGREED WITH GROMYKO TO AN EXCHANGE OF EMBASSIES. WE EXPECT THE SOVIETS TO DO WHAT THEY CAN TO EXPLOIT IRELAND'S POSITION AS THE ONLY NEUTRAL NATION IN THE EC AND THE ONLY AREA IN WESTERN EUROPE WITH SERIOUS CIVIL STRIFE. THE IRISH GOVT IS AWARE OF THE PROBLEM BUT MAY NOT YET BE EQUIPPED TO COPE WITH IT. SORENSON

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